

The California Department of Education's (CDE) and Special Education Division (SED) goals are developed in alignment with the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) focusing on the Community Services and Supports (CSS) component.

MHSA funds are being used to: promote awareness and understanding among local educational agencies (LEAs), Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) and Special Education Administrators of County Offices (SEACO) regarding special educators' communication and collaboration with local mental health agencies and their staff. With the Learning Support and Partnerships Division working on Prevention and Early Intervention, the SED, with guidance from the California Department of Mental Health (DMH) focused on obtaining the local level of collaborative efforts this year.

CDE - The SED staff activities reported to DMH for the period 1/1/09 – 6/30/09 are as follows:

- a. Brief summary of the major activities and highlights performed during January through June FY 09:

Goal 1: Promote partnerships that support the development and implementation of strategies that result in closing the achievement gap and improved outcomes for students in California's kindergarten through 12th grade educational system.

Objective 1a: Determine existing collaborations between local education agencies (LEAs), special education local plan areas (SELPAs), and county mental health entities, including Mental Health Services ACT (MHSA) services and opportunities.

Objective 1a1 and 1a2: Developed a document that depicts the structure of the public education system in California and its relationship with mental health agencies developed and completed in January and February 2009 and submitted to DMH on April 4, 2009.

Objective 1a3: Submit a survey to SELPA and SEACO administrators:

- Spoke before a SEACO meeting in Sacramento on Thursday, January 22, 2009, on the SED listserv survey purpose and the feed-back results for SELPA and SEACO staff.

Objective 1a3: Submit the survey to SELPA and SEACO administrators.

- Forwarded an introductory letter to SELPA directors and SEACO staff on the purpose of SED's questionnaire on the relationship between special educators and county mental health on the Mental Health Services Act and its accompanying survey via electronic mail on March 19, 2009, with a due date of Monday, April 20, 2009.

- Followed-up with an electronic mail reminder to SELPA administrators and SEACO staff on Thursday, April 9, 2009, on the need to ensure submittal of the listserv survey on their relationship with local mental health agencies by Monday, April 20, 2009.
- SED staff forwarded the results and analysis of the SELPA and SEACO staff survey on collaboration between special educators and county mental health MHSA staff to the field on Wednesday, May 6, 2009.

B. Identify 2 or 3 activities or accomplishments that are considered highlights and help further the intent of the MHSA (e.g., achieving system change):

1a3: SED forwarded and solicited feedback from SELPA and SEACO staff on the relationship between special educators and the relationship with county mental health in relationship to the MHSA. Seventy-two percent of those queried responded out of the 120 administrators. Although the relationships ranged from excellent to none, the survey results indicated that special educators desired greater engagement in MHSA county activities.

1a3: SED conducted an analysis and recommendations based on the survey results. These results will initiate activities for the 2009/2009 CDE MHSA Work Plan to promote partnerships between special education and county mental health.

1a3: SED staff participated in the ADP-sponsored multi-departmental task force on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. CDE anticipates that greater collaboration at the state level will take place with SED staff involvement. Since SED staff believes that mothers drinking during pregnancy may also suffer from some form of mental health issue as well as alcohol use, abuse, or dependency, the mothers appear to suffer from the co-occurring disorders of mental health and alcohol issues.

C. Identify activities being coordinated with the local mental health system

1a5: SED staff will compile the responses in a matrix form to view the answers. SED staff will complete an analysis section for the commentary portion of the listserv survey. Implication for students with disabilities and recommendations for involving SELPAs in the local planning process will be included.

- CDE/SED has established baseline data via the listserv survey on the relationship between special educators and county mental health staff on the MHSA.